(d) Government is running a number of welfare schemes for beedi workers in the fields of health, social security, housing, education, and recreation and the beedi workers including their family members are availing benefits under these schemes.

Beedi Workers

†1637. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the number of beedi workers in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Maharashtra, separately;

(b) the number of child and women beedi workers out of them; and

(c) whether Government have ever looked into the fact that benefits of the schemes meant for beedi workers reach to them, if not, the number of such cases detected, districts-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI VIJAY GOEL): (a) The number of identified Beedi workers in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra are 8,06,713,20,481 and 2,12,559 respectively.

(b) As per sample survey conducted by Labour Bureau in 1995, the nation-wise percentage of women and child worker in beedi industry is 65.9 and 1 respectively.

(c) Government has made all out efforts to ensure that the benefits of the welfare schemes meant for Beedi workers reach to the beneficiaries.

EPFO Investment in IDBI

1638. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Employees Provident Fund Organisation is seized of the impending merger of IDBI with the IDBI Bank;

(b) whether the EPFO has invested more than Rs. 3200 crores in IDBI bonds and if so, whether EPFO feels that the investment is safe even after the proposed repeal of the IDBI Act;

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

(c) whether the EPFO is aware that ONGC has recently withdrawn its placements amounting to Rs. 1500 crores with IDBI and reinvested it elsewhere; and

(d) if so, what precautions are being taken to secure the EPFO deposits with IDBI?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI VIJAY GOEL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) The Ministry is keeping watch over the EPFO deposits with IDBI.

Consumer Price Index

1639. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether a new series of consumer price index is in the offing;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether new index would be beneficial to the workers and employees; and

(d) if not the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI VIJAY GOEL): (a) and (b) The exercise relating to compilation of new series of consumer price index numbers for industrial workers with proposed base of 2001 is at advanced stages. The weighting diagrams have been finalised on the basis of results of the Income & Expenditure Survey conducted during September 1999 to August 2000 at 78 centres. The price data are also being regularly collected/updated in respect of selected items, specifications, markets etc. The new series is likely to be available in 2003.

(c) and (d) The new index would be of immense use to the workers and employees as it would help them to receive their wages and variable dearness allowance on the basis of latest consumption pattern and prices.